

APPEARS
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Casey fourth Reagan aide asked about '80 campaign incident

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Washington — A House subcommittee looking into how the 1980 Reagan campaign obtained briefing material prepared for President Jimmy Carter expanded its probe yesterday by asking CIA director William G. Casey what, if anything, he knows about the matter.

Mr. Casey, President Reagan's campaign chairman in 1980, becomes the fourth Reagan administration official to receive a letter seeking information from the Human Resources Subcommittee of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee.

Previously, the committee chairman, Representative Donald J. Albosta (D. Mich.), sent similar letters to White House chief of staff James A. Baker III, Budget Director David A. Stockman and Communications Director David R. Gergen, all of whom have been linked to the briefing documents in a new book on the Reagan presidency and an subsequent press accounts.

White House spokesman Larry M. Speakes said yesterday that Mr. Baker, Mr. Stockman and Mr. Gergen would respond to the committee by tomorrow, the day the panel asked for their replies.

Mr. Speakes also said that President Reagan did not know about the Carter briefing materials in 1980.

A spokesman for Mr. Casey, Kathryn Riedel, said yesterday that the director of the Central Intelligence Agency would answer the committee, but she did not say when. The letter to Mr. Casey, unlike the earlier ones, did not specify a date for responding.

Mr. Albosta, meanwhile, said yesterday that the matter "appears on the surface to be more serious than Watergate."

"Watergate was a break-in of a political campaign headquarters," he said, adding that if the allegations are true the briefing material "was actually stolen from the office of the president of the United States."

The Watergate break-in occurred June 17, 1972, at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee. White House complicity in the attempted cover-up of the crime and its aftermath led to the resignation of President Richard M. Nixon in August 1974.

At issue in the Albosta inquiry is how briefing material used by Mr. Carter to prepare for his only debate with Mr. Reagan found its way into the Reagan campaign.

The matter was first raised in a new book, "Gambling With History: Reagan In The White House," by Lawrence I. Barrett.

Mr. Barrett, *Time* magazine's senior White House correspondent, wrote that as Mr. Reagan was preparing for the Cleveland debate "a member of the campaign staff somehow acquired an unusual prize: briefing material that the other side was using to get Carter ready for the confrontation."

"Apparently a Reagan mole in the Carter camp had filched papers containing the main points the President planned to make when he met Reagan for the debate," Mr. Barrett wrote.

The author also said that Mr. Stockman, then a Republican representative who was to serve as a

stand-in for Mr. Carter to help Mr. Reagan prepare himself for the debate, "was delighted to find most of his homework done for him as he outlined his own script for the dry run."

Mr. Baker was then a senior campaign adviser and deeply involved in debate preparations. According to Mr. Barrett, Mr. Baker "looked the other way when a dirty trick was perpetrated on Carter. He was grateful not to know the mechanics of it."

Mr. Baker has said through an aide that he does not know how the briefing papers were obtained by the Reagan campaign. He has deferred

further comment pending his reply to the subcommittee.

Another name cropped up June 12, when former Carter press secretary Jody Powell, now a syndicated columnist, wrote that the material was given to Mr. Gergen along with Mr. Baker, both of whom passed it on to Mr. Stockman.

Mr. Gergen has refused to comment except to say he will respond to the Albosta subcommittee. Mr. Stockman, through an aide, has said he doesn't know where the materials came from and that he, too, will answer the panel.

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